

**Governor's Proposed Budget FY18-FY-19
Appropriations Hearing
Department of Housing
Friday, February 17, 2017**



Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Ziobron, and Members of the Committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today on the important investments through the Department of Housing to support efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.

I am Ann Faust, the Program Coordinator for the Middlesex County Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (MCCHH). MCCHH works to prevent and end homelessness in Middlesex County.

Because of the investment of State dollars in housing and related services, Middlesex County was one of the first County's in the Nation to effectively end chronic homelessness. As of October 2015, everyone who is identified as being chronically homeless has been matched with a housing resource. We have no more waitlists for this population. The chronically homeless are an expensive population to ignore. The cost of visits to the emergency department, interaction with the criminal justice system and residential treatment centers all decrease significantly when a person has stable housing. In addition, the quality of life and health outcomes improve for our most vulnerable citizens.

Please support the current budget proposal that preserves funding for critical housing and homelessness services and supports, including:

- **The DOH Housing/Homeless Services line item, \$73.7 million in FY 18 and \$78.3 million in FY 19**, for frontline housing/homeless services, outreach, emergency shelters, and the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), which are essential to aid those who have fallen into homelessness and move them quickly to permanent housing. The Rental Assistance Program funds the rental subsidies which make Supportive Housing possible. Supportive Housing continues to be the most effective housing model to assist people experiencing chronic homelessness and is proven to cut public system costs by up to 70%.
- The Homeless Youth line item: Youth outreach services, crisis housing for youth, and housing services and supports are essential services to transition youth from crisis to stability.

This funding is essential to ensure that all of Connecticut's citizens avoid the trauma and indignity of homelessness. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it saves taxpayer dollars. Thank you for your consideration and thank you for your support with efforts to end homelessness in Connecticut.

Sincerely,
Ann Faust
Program Coordinator

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY COALITION
ON HOUSING + HOMELESSNESS**